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ABSTRACT

Considered are the nature and extent of some of the basic conflicts that arise when two, future-oriented, decision-making processes--institutional program planning/resource allocation and collective bargaining--are both present on the same campus. The identified conflicts come from the experiences of a university that was one of the first in the United States to bargain collectively with its faculty (1969) and has been doing so while operating a program planning and resource allocation system. The conflict areas that are identified together with the reasons for the conflict are: (1) job security (collective barg.) vs. staffing flexibility (planning/resource allocation); (2) mandatory late retirement (collective barg.) vs. early retirement (planning/resource allocation); (3) level of faculty compensation (collective barg.) vs. allocation of resources (planning/resource allocation); (4) academic program stability (collective barg.) vs. academic program change (planning/resource allocation); (5) scope of collective bargaining agreements (collective barg.) vs. institutional mission, goals and objectives (planning/resource allocation); (6) faculty-interest-driven model (collective barg.) vs. student-interest-driven model (planning/resource allocation). Institutional research and planning staff of the university developed various strategies and responses to these conflict areas that resulted in some conflict resolution. These strategies and responses are identified and described in greater detail--Early Retirement Costing Model and The Salary Inequity Identification Model. (Author)

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PRESSURE POINT ON CAMPUS:

ACADEMIC PROGRAM PLANNING AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION IN CONFLICT WITH THE BARGAINING TABLE

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the nature and extent of some of the basic conflicts that arise when the two future oriented decision-making processes, institutional program planning/resource allocation, and collective bargaining, are both present on the same campus. The identified conflicts come from the experiences of a university that was one of the first in the United States to bargain collectively with its faculty (1969) and has been doing so at the same time that it has been operating a program planning and resource allocation system.

The conflict areas that are identified together with the reasons for the conflict are:

- Job security (collective barg.) vs. staffing flexibility (planning/resource allocation)
- Mandatory late retirement (collective barg.) vs. early retirement (planning/resource allocation)
- Level of faculty compensation (collective barg.) vs. allocation of resources (planning/resource allocation)
- Academic program stability (collective barg.) vs. academic program change (planning/resource allocation)
- Scope of collective bargaining agreements (collective barg.) vs. institutional mission, goals and objectives (planning/resource allocation)
- Faculty interest driven model (collective barg.) vs. student interest driven model (planning/resource allocation)

Institutional research and planning staff of the university developed various strategies and responses to these conflict areas which resulted in some conflict resolution. These strategies and responses are identified and described in greater detail -- Early Retirement Costing Model and The Salary Inequity Identification Model.

INTRODUCTION

Collective bargaining is not a new presence in American life. Anyone familiar with the historical development of the American industrial complex would say that the bargaining table has existed since the early days of industrial development. Collective bargaining has also been active on the college campus for some time -- having arrived in the early 1940's when maintenance employee unions, food service employee unions and clerical employee unions bargained over terms and conditions of employment in a setting that parallelled the collective bargaining process in the industrial sector. What is new to the campus is collective bargaining by a unionized faculty. The past few years has found a steadily increasing number of institutions engaged in collective bargaining with their faculty. The Chronicle of Higher Education now lists over 400 institutions of higher education in the United States where the faculty is represented by a collective bargaining agent (5).

Another new activity that has emerged across the campuses of this country is long range academic program and resource planning. National studies have increased the awareness within the higher education community regarding the necessity for academic program and resource planning. To cite just one of these studies, I refer to the text entitled More Than Survival written by the Carnegie Foundation for the advancement of teaching. In the chapter entitled, "What Institutions Can Do", the Foundation stresses the need for program and resource planning and offers some strategies and recommendations for such planning activities. I quote:

Recommendation 1: That institutional leaders prepare analyses of their institutions to determine, as accurately as possible, the present situation and the factors shaping the future course. These analyses should be used to inform their colleagues and constituents, and should be part of a larger effort designed to create attitudes receptive to and conditions conducive to change.

Recommendation 2: Each institution, if it has not already done so, should develop an overall strategy for flexibility in the use of funds, assignment of faculty, utilization of space and effective processes to make the necessary long-range decisions (3).

These two recommendations call for serious efforts to grapple with the future using the decision-making processes of today. Since, embodied in both collective bargaining and program planning are decision-making processes which focus on the future, these two processes must interact when they are both present on the same campus. It is this interaction and the inherent nature of each process that leads to the title that has been chosen for my presentation today.

SOME EXAMPLES FROM CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

I will attempt to illustrate the inherent conflict between collective bargaining and program planning by sharing with you some personal experiences. The University I currently serve was one of the first single campus, public four-year institutions of higher education in the United States to enter into a collective bargaining agreement with its faculty. The year was 1970. Since that time, two subsequent

multiple year agreements have been negotiated. The first agreement was for the three year period 1971 - 1974; the second for the years 1974 - 1977. Collective bargaining with a faculty bargaining agent has been functioning at Central for some six years.

Concurrent with the collective bargaining process at Central Michigan University has been a long range institutional academic program planning and resource allocation system. This institutional planning system is an effort to shape the future of the University by a deliberate educational and decision-making process. Resources of the University are allocated to the various segments of the institution in response to deliberate decisions regarding basic program continuance, program improvement, new program development and program deletion (4). Charles J. Ping, former Provost of Central Michigan University and now President of Ohio University, captured the essence of this long range planning and resource allocation system when he stated:

> Long range planning involves the effort to anticipate and describe the future and the effort to shape that future by intelligent action. Institutional planning results in the determination of resource allocations. The two, planning and allocations, represent one system; they form a coherent whole if the process is to have value and consequences for institutional life.
>
> The planning and allocation system is designed to describe the future of the institution as a coherent whole and to provide for allocation of resources which support this description. The process attempts to rationalize decision-

> making by minimizing the ad hoc character of decisions. No important decision can be made in isolation from all other decisions because every allocation affects all other possible allocations (10).

This last sentence is the key to the interaction, which I choose to label as conflict, between a bargaining table and academic program planning. Allow me to quote it again.

> No important decision can be made in isolation from all other decisions because every allocation affects all other possible allocations.

EXAMPLES OF CONFLICT

Allow me to now share with you some specific examples of conflict between the bargaining table and an academic program planning and resource allocation system. My first example is probably the most obvious. Agreements at the bargaining table fix levels of faculty compensation and thus, limit the resources available for other allocations through the planning process. Since the total dollars available for allocation is not inexhaustible, a higher level of faculty compensation results in less resources available for other allocations. Conversely, decisions made in planning the academic future of an institution -- goal description, establishment of objectives, program changes -- eventually involve resource allocation. Program planning that incorporates an increasing share of the total resource dollars produces a limiting parameter for any possible collective bargaining agreement.

Often this "dollar" conflict produces additional conflicts with third parties who are both internal and external to the institution. I will have more to say about this later, but allow me to illustrate this "growth of conflict" by briefly examining what are the flexible portions of an institutional budget and their relationship to parties not directly involved in either the bargaining or planning processes.

I will illustrate using as my example a state supported institution. Simply stated, the two flexible revenue portions of such an institution's budget are:

1. State appropriation, and
2. Tuition (number of students).

The two flexible expenditure portions of the budget are:

1. Compensation level, and
2. Faculty/student ratio (workload and number of faculty).

Compensation decisions made at the bargaining table can lead to a decision to increase tuition. This decision might quickly produce conflict with a third party -- the student body. Or, instead of a decision to increase tuition, the decision might be to seek increased state appropriation. This intent might even more quickly lead to conflict with the state funding agencies. Conversely, academic program planning decision can alter faculty/student ratios which can produce conflict with accrediting agencies, review boards and even specialized student groups.

A second example of conflict is in the realm of staffing strategies. Job security has become a very important goal for faculty bargaining agents. Invariably, job security is related to the institution's tenure policy and/or staffing strategy. The faculty bargaining agent will strive for minimal pro-

bationary time, faculty-based tenure approval structures, binding arbitration, etc., in order to increase the feeling of job security among its members. Tenure, which historically was the result of an explicit academic judgement, is viewed as the bargaining member's right to be claimed after a period of employment. Collective bargaining seeks the continual erosion of the acceptance of the need to make explicit academic judgements. Conversely, the planning process, aware of the growing and changing content of disciplines and the shifting of student interests, will have as its goal a flexible and contemporary staffing strategy -- not a rigid or "quick-to-tenure" strategy. The ability to respond to change through a flexible staffing pattern will be a priority of the planning system. Such flexibility can in part be obtained through a systematic pattern of temporary non-tenure track appointments instead of regular tenure-track appointments. Such temporary appointments can be reallocated on an annual basis in response to academic program change and student interest. With no tenure expectation attached to such appointments, part-time or seasonal appointments in response to specific needs are possible.

A third example, closely related to staffing strategy, lies in mandatory retirement ages and early retirement programs. Understandably, the faculty bargaining agent will be hesitant to support lower retirement ages or early retirement programs without clear evidence of positive return to its membership. The bargaining agent will resist attempts by the institution, through its academic planning process, to change retirement ages or to encourage early retirement unless the academic planning process can also demonstrate a positive result for the effected individual. Conversely, as already noted, the planning process will seek to foster staffing flexibility. An immediate way to accomplish a

a portion of that flexibility is through increased retirements or "phased" retirements. Faculty positions that become vacant because of retirement can be "reallocated" to other program areas or be used to sustain "painless retrenchment." At least one institution to date, Youngstown State in Ohio, has been able to formally begin to solve this conflict by incorporating early retirement language into their negotiated agreement (11).

A fourth example of conflict is in the governance of academic program development. The planning process seeks to encourage change and to foster the development of contemporary and responsive academic programs in light of student interest and societal need. Such new programs are subsequently allocated the resources necessary for development and implementation. These resources are most often reallocated resources; that is, resources that were formerly allocated for another purpose but are now being allocated for this new purpose. This "reallocation process" is most often indirect conflict with the bargaining table where the issues of campus governance structures and processes concerned with the substance of academic program are being debated. If the reallocation of resources, such as faculty positions, affects the employment conditions of bargaining unit members, then the bargaining table will also address this issue, but in all liklihood, with different motives. Instead of the desire to foster change (remember Recommendation 1 of the Carnegie Foundation!), the bargaining table, which is basically a conservative process, will strive to continue the status quo as it reflects the interests of the bargaining unit.

A fifth example, closely alligned to the governance of academic program development, is the conflict surrounding entirely new forms of educational instruction

and delivery of instructional programs. Innovative non-traditional educational programs with such titles as "University Without Walls", "College of Life-Long Learning", "Institute for Personal and Career Development", etc., which extensively utilize instructional technology to deliver their academic programs to individuals and places far removed from any campus offer little area or opportunity for traditional faculty involvement in academic control. Often a course is directed by a person who is not from the campus and thus not a member of the bargaining unit using various instructional packages (programmed modules, tapes, television, etc.) which have probably been developed with little or campus faculty involvement. The bargaining unit can easily view such new forms of education as threatening to their own security and their own sense of academic worth and seek to limit or completely stop such developments.

Two final examples involve the student body. The first I have alluded to and is the most obvious since it has been written about and debated for some time. I refer to the involvement of students in the collective bargaining process either as observers or as negotiating team members. Neil S. Bucklew, Vice President for Administration at Central Michigan University and recently named Provost of Ohio University, identified the conflicts inherent in the bargaining process when students are involved when he wrote:

> Students have traditionally expressed an interest in various faculty employee policies and practices. Because of the significant impact of bargaining on the academic personnel budget, students can also view their tuition costs as being directly affected by collective bargaining negotiations with faculty. Various faculty

> employment conditions have been the subject of student newspaper editorials and general student complaints for some time. Many students would indicate not only an interest but also a sense of deserved involvement in such matters for negotiation as faculty workload and class size (2).

Such student involvement in the bargaining process will conflict with faculty centered resource allocation. Students view the resource demands of the bargaining table as being in competition with resource demands of student programs and they will attempt to minimize the former in preference to maximizing the latter.

The second example of conflict involving the student body is not as directly identifiable as their direct involvement in the bargaining process itself -- but yet is more profound. The academic planning and resource allocation system is responsive to student interests in conjunction with the role of the institution. Within the context of the role and mission of the institution, students, by virtue of their educational program interests, drive the planning and resource alloction system. Some planners have referred to this process as "the enrollment driven system" or more grossly stated, "students shaping the future by virtue of their feet." This responsiveness of the planning and resource allocation system to student educational program interests is in direct conflict with the bargaining table. The issues at the bargaining table are mainly employee motivated or "driven" by faculty interests. In fact, very often the faculty bargaining position will be to negotiate over institutional response to change and student interests. Occasionally, the faculty interests

present at the bargaining table might coincide with student educational program interests, but congruence is rare. For the most part, the interests are at odds.

SOME RESPONSES TO CONFLICT

lest you accuse me of offering no possible solutions to some of the conflicts that I have described, allow me to cite some attempts at conflict resolution that have been made at various institutions. I offer these as suggestions, not as promises. What worked at these institutions might not work for your institutions in the same way. I do believe, however, that some of this work can be adapted to provide potential for conflict resolution at your institutions.

In response to the conflicts that involve third parties -- most notably the students, some institutions, either independently or under state laws, have involved students either as direct observers to the bargaining process or as members of the respective negotiating teams.

I have already mentioned that at least one institution has, as part of their negotiated collective bargaining agreement, early retirement language. I would also refer you to two papers on the topic of the financial implications of early retirement. The first was published in the February 1974 issue of College Management (6) while the second was given as an address at the College and University Systems Exchange 1975 national convention with subsequent publication in the Proceedings of that convention (7). Both of these articles focused on the development of a simulation model that could be used to measure the financial impact of early retirement on any individual. The model attempted to answer two questions regarding early retirement:

1. What is the difference in net take home pay at a given age between a person who is working as compared with a person who has retired, and

2. What would be the difference in annual retirement income for each year of a person's life between a person who continues to work and one who retired early?

The first question was short-range -- the second long-range. The information needed to answer these questions was compiled and a computerized costing model was developed which provided guidelines on an individual basis for any individual faculty member. The computerized software for the simulation model is available from the College and University Systems Exchange National Library for institutional use.

A great deal of conflict can be avoided if the suspicion and misunderstanding regarding the "comparative wealth" of the various recipients of resources can be reduced or hopefully eliminted. Replacing the "we think this" or "we heard that" claims that often surround both the bargaining table and the planning and allocation process should be accurate and understandable information. A specific example is comparative information regarding salary and fringe benefit equity. Information comparing compensation levels within the institution to levels at other institutions can be obtained from a number of sources. American Association of University Professors, National Association of College and University Business Officers, institutional athletic conference affiliations, state coordinating agencies and certain national surveys are some which come to mind.

Just as important as external comparisons is the institution's own internal equity among and within its employee groups. Nothing undermines the effectiveness of a planning and allocation system or the bargaining table as the beliefs that certain employee groups, either as a whole or portions of it, are being unequitable treated. A method for reducing such beliefs lies in the establishment of a systematic program for determining and alleviating inequities. Such a program should involve both the opportunity for any individual or group of individuals to make their case based upon their interpretations and their information as well as an institutional procedure for arriving at an independent judgement based upon objective information.

To help in the establishment of such procedures, I refer you to several articles dealing with techniques for identifying and eliminating salary and compensation inequities within employee groups. The October 1975 issue of the American Association of University Professors Bulletin carried an article which focused on a procedure to analyze the fairness of salaries, particularly women faculty salaries, on a college or university campus (1). The July/August 1975 issue of Journal of the College and University Personnel Association (9) and the April 1974 issue of College Management (6) described the utilization of the statistical technique of multiple regression analysis to identify salary inequities within an employee group and determine adjustment amounts that would help to alleviate the inequities.

Finally, the establishment of a formal special conference capability affords both the institution and the bargaining agent the capability to address conflict whenever and wherever it occurs. Special conference capability, that is agreed

to in the negotiated contract itself, guarantees both parties to an issue the capability of an avenue toward resolution of that issue. It is a way in which the contract parties agree to meet their duty to bargain collectively and at the same time lead to conflict resolution.

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